

S U C C E S S



Recently, the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners passed a policy establishing smoke-free areas on county property. This policy now requires that areas within 25 feet of doors, windows and air intakes remain 100% smoke-free.

The planning and implementation of Klickitat County's new policy spanned a two-year period. It began as an idea presented to the Personnel Department, who is responsible for establishing county policies and procedures. At first, there was some interest in the policy, but not a lot of motivation to institute a policy change. Over time, complaints from county employees began to compound. These complaints ranged from employees and visitors having to walk through clouds of smoke when entering county buildings, to smoke entering the workplace through doors and windows. The Personnel Department then contacted the Klickitat County Health Department to revisit the idea of establishing smoke-free areas around doors, windows and air intakes. Tobacco Prevention and Control Program staff gathered sample policies to share with the Personnel Department. Once the policy was written, it was shared with staff at the Washington State Department of Health for comments and/or suggestions. Policy revisions were made and the policy was ready for presentation to the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners for approval. Now the question remained, "When was the right time to approach the commissioners with this policy?"

In 2004, it was announced that the county would begin construction on a new building in that would house several county agencies on the west end of Klickitat County. Perfect timing! Tobacco Program staff suggested to the Personnel Department that the county will now have to look at how they are planning on addressing tobacco use on the new property. (Up until now, all county agencies on the west end were housed in office spaces leased by the county, making it very difficult to pass a policy addressing secondhand smoke.) The Personnel Department presented the policy to County Commissioners and Department Heads for comments and approval. After several meetings and discussions, it was decided that the commissioners would accept and implement the policy.

October 3, 2005, county departments move into their new offices. Signage for the new 25 ft. smoke-free perimeter around building doors, windows and air intakes has been ordered and will be installed soon. Now, employee and public notification about the new policy is taking place. The departments who worked long and hard on making this policy possible are looking forward to its implementation.

Through progressive thinking, interdepartmental teamwork and support, and proper timing, Klickitat County was able to pass a secondhand smoke policy that will now protect the health of those working for and visiting Klickitat County agencies.

Building on Success The Opportunities Ahead

Tobacco Prevention & Control 2005 Annual Conference